



GAIL FARBER, Director

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

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IN REPLY PLEASE
REFER TO FILE: **EP-4**
A3509i

December 21, 2010

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Gail Farber
Director of Public Works

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "G. Farber", is written over the printed name and title.

EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE FOOD CONTAINERS – FEASIBILITY OF ADOPTING A RESTRICTION AT BUSINESSES IN UNINCORPORATED COUNTY AREAS QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT NO. 1

On September 21, 2010, your Board adopted a prohibition on the purchase and use of expanded polystyrene (EPS) food containers at County operations and instructed the Director of Public Works and County Counsel to report back within 12 months on the feasibility of implementing a restriction on the use of EPS food containers at food service establishments and retail stores in the County unincorporated areas, including potential recommended changes to the County Code.

Your Board further directed Public Works to specifically look at appropriate infrastructure to handle alternative materials as part of its feasibility study and to provide quarterly updates to the Board as to the progress that is being made. This is the first quarterly report.

Approach

Public Works initiated a collaborative process to evaluate the feasibility of restricting EPS food containers in the unincorporated County areas. The first step was to convene a stakeholder working group and solicit feedback and ideas from all interested parties. Building on efforts leading up to your Board's action on September 21, 2010, the stakeholder working group now includes representatives from restaurants and retailers, manufacturers of EPS and alternative food containers, business advocacy organizations, environmental organizations, consumer advocacy groups, and government agencies. The first working group meeting provided an opportunity for group discussions regarding a variety of options to address this issue and was very constructive. The next meeting is scheduled for January 2011.

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In collaboration with the stakeholder working group, the effectiveness of alternatives to EPS food containers used by private food establishments and retail stores operating in unincorporated areas will be evaluated. Concurrently, Public Works staff is evaluating the success of the prohibition of EPS food containers at County facilities, as well as the newly launched EPS food recycling pilot program at the Sheriff's Department.

In addition, Public Works staff continues to research case studies from the implementation of similar prohibitions in other municipalities in California and the nation. Staff met with representatives of the City of Santa Monica in December to discuss the City's prohibition, which was implemented in 2008. Case studies, as well as experience and feedback from potentially affected industries, will be evaluated in forming the basis for a recommendation to your Board.

NG/CS:td

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cc: County Counsel
Chief Executive Office
Executive Office